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Annual Report on the Working of the Backward Class Department 1936-37

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ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORKING OF THE BACKWARD CLASS DEPARTMENT FOR 1936-1937.

No. B.C. 920 of 1937.

Poona, 30th October 1937.

From

D. SYMINGTON, Esquire, I.C.S.,
Backward Class Officer,
Bombay Presidency, Poona ;

To

The SECRETARY to GOVERNMENT,
General Department, Bombay.

Subject.—Report on the working of the Backward Class Department for the year 1936-1937.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the Administration Report on the work of the Backward Class Branch of this Department, for the year ending 31st March 1937.

Charge.

2. Mr. C. S. Devadhar, B.A., Assistant Backward Class Officer, Southern Circle, Dharwar, acted as Backward Class Officer up to 6th June 1936 while I was on leave, and thereafter the charge was held by me for the remainder of the year.

The charge of the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Northern Circle, Ahmedabad, was held by Mr. S. Benjamin, B.A., LL.B., throughout the year. The charge of the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Southern Circle, Dharwar, was held by Mr. C. S. Devadhar, B.A., up to 7th January 1937, except for the period when he acted as Backward Class Officer and for his leave period of 2 months from 24th October 1936 ;, during which periods Mr. G. B. Shitole, the Office Superintendent of this office, acted as Assistant Backward Class Officer, Southern Circle, Dharwar. The post of the Assistant Backward Class Officer, Central Circle, Bijapur, was held by Mr. V. R. Dhotrikar up to 13th January 1937 when he proceeded on leave prior to retirement. Mr. C. S. Devadhar, B.A., was then transferred to hold charge of the Central Circle, Bijapur, and Mr. G. B. Shitole, the Office Superintendent of this office was posted as Assistant Backward Class Officer, Southern Circle, Dharwar.

Classification of Backward Classes.

3. The list of Backward Classes classified as "Scheduled Classes", "Aboriginal and Hill Tribes" and "Other Backward Classes" issued under Government Resolution, General Department, No. 9330, dated December 3rd, 1934, remained in force during the year. The Schedules are now due for revision and this question must soon be gone into by the Backward Class Board.

Primary Education of Scheduled Classes.

4. Information regarding the number of scheduled class pupils, etc., as required by paragraph 23 of the Report of the Depressed Classes and Aboriginal Tribes Committee of 1930, was obtained from Local Authorities in the Presidency for the year ending 31st March 1936. A summary of the information is as below :—

	Excluding Bombay Municipal Schools.		Including Bombay Municipal Schools.	
	1934–35.	1935–36.	1934–35.	1935–36.
1. Number of Scheduled Class pupils—				
(*i*) Attending common schools ..	16,130	49,046	53,806	58,609
(*ii*) Attending special schools ..	15,135	14,712	15,135	14,712
(*iii*) Attending all schools ..	61,265	64,658	68,941	73,321
2. Number of Scheduled Class teachers—				
(*i*) In common schools	393	459	520	601
(*ii*) In special schools	390	378	390	378
(*iii*) In all schools	783	837	910	979
3. Number of separate scheduled class schools.	372	356	372	356

N.B.—The above figures are exclusive of Government schools.

The above figures show that the progress made in this direction is encouraging. The number of scheduled class children attending common schools has increased by 4,803 and that of children attending special schools has gone down by 423. Similarly there has been a rise of 81 scheduled class teachers working in common schools while the number in the special schools has fallen by 12. The number of separate scheduled class schools has decreased by 16.

It is clear that the policy of closing separate schools can be put into practice without causing any diminution in the total number of Scheduled class children attending primary schools. Progress in this direction may therefore well be accelerated since, as I remarked last year, the social value of the common school and common seating cannot be overestimated.

The six primary night schools which were opened at Sholapur last year by the Backward Class District Committee, Sholapur, continued to do good work. The Schools impart elementary vernacular instruction to Depressed Class adults. About 250 students take advantage of these schools. This is an example which other Backward Class District Committees would do well to follow. The Municipal Borough, Sholapur, continued to pay a monthly grant of Rs. 25 for each school.

Differential Treatment of Scheduled Class children in Schools.

5. The situation in this regard is much the same as that reported last year. Gujarat still lags behind the rest of the Presidency, and the necessity for a Special Assistant to the Educational Inspector, Northern Division, for Backward Classes is still felt.

Elsewhere the prejudice against common seating appears to be lessening, except in villages where schools are held in temples. Such cases still exist, although they are fewer in number. It is the duty of School Boards to take steps to shift all village schools from temples to non-contentious buildings.

Secondary, College and Technical Education.

6. According to Government orders all Backward Class pupils certified to be poor by the Head Master of the school concerned continued to be exempt from payment of room rent in the Hostels attached to Government secondary schools.

Poor students from the Backward classes were also admitted free in Government Secondary Schools.

This Department gave monetary help to poor Backward Class students reading in secondary schools by way of special scholarships and hostel stipends. The amount thus expended was Rs. 855. These scholarships are entirely distinct from the ordinary scholarships granted by the Educational Department.

Scholarships in lump sums amounting to Rs. 718 were also awarded to Backward Class College students towards payment of University examination fees, College fees, etc., in consultation with the Director of Public Instruction.

7. During the year poor Backward Class students undergoing Technical Training in various Institutions were also awarded scholarships

aggregating Rs. 448. A monthly scholarship of Rs. 15 was continued to be paid throughout the year to a scheduled class girl undergoing the nursing course at Belgaum Civil Hospital.

Admissions of Backward Class Teachers in Training Colleges.

8. Information regarding the number of Backward Class teachers that were admitted to various Training Institutions in the four Divisions was obtained from the Educational Inspectors for the year 1936-37 and the figures are given in the subjoined statement :—

Serial No.	Division.	Total Number of teachers admitted in Training Colleges.	Total Number of Backward Class Teachers admitted.	Total Number of scheduled Class Teachers admitted (included in the preceding column).
1	Northern Division ..	107	12 or 11·2 per cent.	7
2	Bombay Division ..	39	6 or 15·4 ,,	3
3	Central Division ..	469	72 or 15·4 ,,	47
4	Southern Division ..	94	15 or 16·0 ,,	8

The position in all the Divisions seems satisfactory. The percentage for the admission of Backward Class Teachers in Government Training Institutions in the Northern Division has been raised from 10 to 15 under Government Resolution, Educational Department, No. 6077 of 17th June 1936 and it will be brought into effect from the next year.

Depressed Class Hostels.

9. The Government Hostel for Depressed Class boys, Poona, continued to work satisfactorily during the year. As already reported boys from all Marathi-speaking districts receive the benefit of this hostel. Hitherto the food charges of the boys in this hostel had been treated as stipends. Since this system was found to be wasteful and to be operating unfairly in favour of boys having free-studentships as against those not having them, it was abolished with effect from 1st April 1936. As a result considerable economies have been effected and it has become possible to increase the number of inmates by 10 within the same budget provision.

During the year 17 Depressed Class Hostels in various parts of the Presidency received grant-in-aid from the Department as shown below :—

Serial No.	Name of the hostel.	Grants paid in 1936-37.
		Rs. a. p.
1	Depressed Class Hostel, Ahmedabad	522 0 0
2	Depressed Class Education Society's Hostel, Thana ..	2,507 0 0
3	Depressed Class Education Society's Hostel, Dharwar ..	1,800 0 0
4	Karnatak Education Society's Hostel, Belgaum ..	309 0 0
5	Boarding House for Parwari boys, Mahad	192 0 0
6	Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Boarding House, Satara ..	1,111 0 0
7	Bahishkrit Anath Vidhyarthi Ashram, Sholapur ..	900 0 0
8	Depressed Class Mission Society's Hostel, Parel, Bombay.	288 0 0 Paid during the current year.
9	Asprushyodharak Boarding House, Chalisgaon ..	194 0 0
10	Shri Chokha Mela Boarding House, Jalgaon ..	100 0 0
11	Shri Shahu Chhatrapati Depressed Classes Hostel, Nasik	144 0 0
12	Poona Seva Sadan Depressed Classes Hostel, Poona ..	295 0 0
13	Ambedkar Anath Vidhyarthi Ashram, Manmad ..	148 0 0
14	Union Boarding House, Poona	134 0 0
15	Kakkaya Samaj Boarding, Nipani	100 0 0
	New Hostels.	
16	Katkari Hostel at Wada	460 0 0
17	Hostel for Tadvi Bhils at Yaval, District East Khandesh	100 0 0
	Total ..	9,016 0 0

During the year Government have sanctioned the opening of a Hostel for Tadvi Bhils at Yawal, district East Khandesh. The Depressed Class Education Society's Hostel at Ahmedabad was abolished in May 1936, and a new Depressed Class Hostel in its place was started shortly afterwards. The hostel for Katkari boys at Wada, district Thana, was started with effect from 1st June 1936. Government have agreed to pay, as a special case, a grant of Rs. 60 per inmate per annum, on average attendance, for a maximum number of 15 boys.

Recruitment in Public services.

10. The standing orders of Government on this subject may be summarized as below :—

(*a*) 10 per cent. of all clerical vacancies under each recruiting officer are to be filled by Backward Class (including Scheduled Class) candidates until Backward Class members occupy 5 per cent. of all clerical posts.

(*b*) 20 per cent. of all vacancies as *talatis* are to be filled by Backward Class (including Scheduled Class) candidates, until 10 per cent. of *talatis*' establishments are filled by Backward Class members.

(*c*) *All* menial vacancies are to be filled by members of the Scheduled Classes until 10 per cent. of the menial establishments are filled by Scheduled Class members.

These orders are gradually producing the desired effect, but they are not in my opinion complied with sufficiently strictly by many appointing officers :—

(*i*) Registers of candidates from Backward Classes seeking for employment in Government service continued to be maintained in the main office as well as in the offices of the Assistant Backward Class Officers. In pursuance of Government Memorandum, General Department, No. 9989-D, dated 26th October 1936 lists of Backward Class candidates on our Registers for recruitment to Government service as clerks and menials are supplied twice annually to the Heads of Major departments under the General Department. They are also supplied to recruiting officers at all times on enquiry. It is however also incumbent upon appointing officers themselves to find by enquiry suitable Backward Class candidates for appointment so to reach the prescribed quotas.

(*ii*) There have been a few instances of candidates who failed to join when appointed or left shortly after joining without sufficient reasons. The names of such candidates are eliminated from the Registers, as such instances leave a bad impression.

(*iii*) The number of Backward Class candidates for whom positions were secured in various Government offices during the year, through this Department, is as under :—

Qualifications.	Backward Classes.	Scheduled Classes.	Total.
Matriculation	7	16	23
Vernacular School Final	6	21	27
Non-qualified	6	38	44
Total ..	19	75	94

Three scheduled class candidates were sent up by the Backward Class Officer to the selection Committee for the Police Training School, Nasik, but were not selected.

Training of Backward Class candidates in office procedure.

11. During the year under report three Scheduled Class candidates were trained in this Department in office routine. They were each granted a monthly scholarship of Rs. 12. The three candidates are at present serving as clerks in Government offices.

Experiments in housing sites.

12. In last year's report mention was made of housing sites for Backward Classes in the following places :—

Jalgaon, Varkheda in West Khandesh District, Gadag in Dharwar District, Bijapur and Sholapur (5 sites).

Progress continued to be made by way of disposing of plots in these sites except in the following places at Sholapur :—

(*i*) In Budhawar Peth of Sholapur City, the original lay-out of 25 plots has been revised on the advice of the Consulting Surveyor to Government, and the whole site divided into 15 plots each plot accommodating 3 tenements. The matter is awaiting final sanction of the General Board.

(*ii*) The proposed lay-out in the Municipal land at Tirhegaon necessitated a further acquisition of $1\frac{1}{2}$ acres of the adjacent school site, and as this requires Government's sanction, the necessary steps are now being taken by the Sholapur Municipal Borough.

In the Maharwada in Budhawar Peth, Sholapur City, the Municipality have started constructing roads and have sanctioned for this area 30 modern type cement latrines, costing nearly Rs. 3,600.

At Bammapur-Hubli, district Dharwar, the site has now been developed into 27 plots, each plot measuring 40′×40′. The price per plot has been fixed at Rs. 50. Demarcation of plots, etc., is in progress.

13. In addition, steps are taken to provide new sites in the following places :—

(*a*) A site in Survey No. 345 of Akluj village in Sholapur District has been acquired, and laid out into plots of 33′ × 33′ each. The plots are intended to be given to Depressed Classes as well as Criminal Tribes licensees $\frac{2}{3}$rd of the site being reserved for the Scheduled Classes.

(*b*) *Municipal land for Bhangis Chawls at Barsi.*—The question of acquiring a suitable site for erecting a chawl for the Bhangis had been long pending. The Barsi Municipality has now acquired a piece of land at a cost of Rs. 2,067-3-6. Further action in the matter will be taken up by the Municipality.

(*c*) *Panjarpole Mang Colony at Sholapur.*—Plot Nos. 17 and 18, in the Town Planning Scheme of Sholapur, measuring nearly 4 acres, have been acquired by the Sholapur Municipal Borough, at a cost of Rs. 16,000 for conversion into a Mang Colony. The lay-out has been approved by the Consulting Surveyor to Government.

(*d*) A large plot out of the old Judge's Court site (Plot No. 9 in Sholapur Town Planning Scheme No. 1) measuring 16 acres and 4 gunthas, has been acquired by the Sholapur Municipal Borough, at a cost of Rs. 26,510 (to be paid in suitable instalments), for the use of the members of the Scheduled Classes. A lay-out is being prepared, and submitted to the Consulting Surveyor to Government for approval. The plots will be sold out by the Municipality in consultation with the Backward Class Officer according to Government Resolution, Revenue Department, No. 3238/33 of 4th February 1937.

At Vadula Budruk, Shevgaon Taluka, district Ahmednagar, the Maharwada is subjected to floods of the Nani river particularly during the rains. It is proposed to acquire 1 acre and 8 gunthas of land out of Survey No. 154, for housing the Mahars and Land Acquisition proceedings are in progress.

Lands for cultivation.

14. Applications for grant of land for cultivation from members of the Backward Classes were forwarded to the Collectors concerned.

Water facilities.

15. (*i*) Government under their Resolution, General Department, No. 453/33 dated 15th June 1936, allotted Rs. 10,000 in equal halves, for the Southern and Central Divisions for improvement in water supply for the Scheduled Classes. The allotment was placed at the disposal of the Commissioners of the Divisions and was distributed by districts for expenditure in consultation with the District Local Boards and the Backward Class Officer.

(*ii*) Some progress in erecting notice boards on all public wells by local bodies in accordance with Government Resolution, General Department, No. 4770, dated 4th March 1935, continued to be made. The position in this connection is more satisfactory in the Southern Division than elsewhere.

The erection and permanent retention of notice boards on all wells erected out of public revenue will it is hoped have a cumulative effect, if not an immediate one on the minds of the public. But hitherto no noticeable progress has been made in conquering this particular prejudice which, besides being the most tenaciously held, is also unfortunately the most cruel in effect.

Miscellaneous Grievances of the Backward Classes.

16. A number of miscellaneous applications were received and dealt with. Below are a few such instances which indicate the variety of matters in which the Department is called upon to render assistance :—

(i) A Scheduled class woman of Narthan, taluka Olpad, district Surat, was refused admission in a bus plying for hire between Surat (Chowk) and Kundiana. This was brought to the notice of the District Superintendent of Police, who ordered the suspension of Permit for 15 days.

(ii) Defects in the Bombay Municipal Chawls for the Scheduled Classes at Coachin Street, and at Palton Road, in respect of accommodation, lights, and water facilities, were brought to the notice of the Municipal Commissioner, Bombay, and were rectified where possible.

(iii) At Vansar, taluka Matar, district Kaira, it was noticed that the Scheduled Classes skinned and cleaned carcasses quite near their own houses. The Collector of Kaira was requested to assign some other suitable site, and this was done.

(iv) At Dohad, district Panch Mahals, it was observed that dirt and bones were heaped outside the slaughter house near the Scheduled Class quarters. The President of Dohad Municipality, was moved in the matter, and the nuisance was removed.

(v) The Vatandar Mahars of Mangur village, taluka Chikkodi, district Belgaum, complained that they were much troubled by the village officers who exacted forced labour from them. The matter was represented to the Collector of Belgaum, who ordered a list of duties to be done by the Mahars to be drawn up and supplied both to the Mahars and the Village officers.

(vi) Complaints of the Mahars regarding non-payment of " Aya " were forwarded to the Revenue Authorities concerned and settled.

At Hebsur, taluka Hubli, district Dharwar, a Panchayat as required under section 18 of the Watan Act was held and the Mamlatdar, Hubli effected recoveries of arrears of " Aya ".

(vii) Many applications regarding representation on local bodies were received and forwarded to the proper quarters.

General.

17. *(a)* Attempts have been made to work the Devadasis Protection Act X of 1934. This evil practice of dedication is most prevalent in the Karnatak, particularly in the Belgaum, Dharwar, and Bijapur Districts. The non-official Backward Class District Committees in these districts are showing interest in instituting prosecutions under the Act; and the District Magistrate, Belgaum, in which district the offences most often take place, has issued instructions to the Magistrates under him to accept complaints lodged by these Committees. They are exempted from

depositing "Bhatta" and from payment of process fees. In the Belgaum District, 2 cases, under the Devadasi Protection Act of 1934, were disposed of ending in conviction of the accused. In the Dharwar District, 4 cases were reported by this Department, and are pending trial. It is a healthy sign that voluntary efforts are being made by members of the castes chiefly concerned to suppress this deep rooted evil among themselves.

(*b*) Propaganda work directed towards the amelioration of the condition of the Backward Classes is carried on as far as possible by members of this Department when on tour, by way of advising them to abandon carrion eating, to give up dirty habits, to avoid drunkenness, and to abolish early marriages, etc.

The Backward Class Board.

18. The life of the Backward Class Board formed under Government Resolution, General Department, No. 8697, dated 26th June 1934 for a period of 2 years was further extended up to March 31st, 1937 under Government Resolution, General Department, No. 8697, dated the 19th June 1936. The Backward Class Board thus continued to work throughout the year. During the year, 2 sessions of the Backward Class Board were held. The subjects discussed in the meetings are detailed in Appendix I.

Finance.

19. The expenditure incurred by the Backward Class Department under the Budget head "37, Miscellaneous Departments, Transferred" was as follows :—

	Rs.	a.	p.
Pay of officers	4,160	0	0
Pay of Establishment	4,713	0	0
Allowance and Honoraria	2,560	0	0
Contingencies	8,821	0	0
Scholarships	2,353	0	0
Grants-in-aid to Depressed Class Hostels ..	9,016	0	0
Total ..	31,623	0	0

Allowances and Honoraria include the cost of travelling allowances paid to Members of the Backward Class Board, and Contingencies include the amount spent on experiments on housing sites for Backward Classes and also expenditure on account of food charges, etc., in the Government Depressed Class Hostel, Poona.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

D. SYMINGTON,

Backward Class Officer,

Bombay Presidency, Poona.

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APPENDIX I.

Subjects discussed by the Backward Class Board.

No.	Date.	Subject discussed.
1	4th July 1936 ..	Provision of funds for the post of an Assistant Deputy Educational Inspector for the education of the Depressed Classes in Gujerat.
2	Do. ..	The appointment of an attendance Officer for the East Khandesh District.
3	18th November 1936.	Recruitment of Backward Classes as primary school teachers under Local Authorities.
4	Do. ..	Organizing of Co-operative Societies for Scheduled Classes on the lines similar to those adopted by the Madras Government.

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